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U.S. Application No. 09/751,702 Examiner BROWN, Art Unit 2611
Submission of Amendment with RCE in Response to December 1, 2005 Office Action

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A system for controlling and managing presentation to viewers of ~~television, cable, satellite, Internet, broadcast or other~~ programming content, the system comprising:
 - a. a receiver adapted to receive ~~from a service provider~~ a signal corresponding to a program and program control data ~~associated with at least a first portion of the program, the program control data comprising control instructions to alter the program according to a ratings attribute~~ having a data format in which a default entry is subsequently followed by a series of data records, with each data record associated with a particular portion of the program, each data record having a linear representation comprising an offset time stamp, a rating value, a content attribute value, a component value, and an action;
 - b. a viewer interface adapted to receive information related to program presentation preferences of a viewer; and
 - c. a processor adapted (1) to modify ~~the content of at least the first portion of the program based on the program control data and program presentation preferences~~ and (2) to output the modified program first portion for presentation on a display device ~~with the remainder of the program.~~
2. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the offset time stamp is expressed from a start time of the program ~~processor is further adapted to modify the first portion by blocking an audio, video or text component of the program as specified by the received program control data.~~
3. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the offset time stamp is expressed in hours, minutes, seconds, and frames from a start of the program ~~processor is further adapted to delete the first portion as specified by the received program control data.~~

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4. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the component value of each data record refers to at least one of an audio and video portion of the program to which the rating value and the content attribute value apply ~~processor is further adapted to substitute alternate programming for at least the first portion as specified by the received program control data.~~
5. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 4 1, wherein the component value of each data record refers to at least one of a substitute audio and substitute video portion for the program to which the rating value and the content attribute value apply ~~signal carries the alternate programming via a channel comprising programming having audio, video or both audio and video components.~~
6. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein if the component value is unspecified, then the rating value and the content attribute value are assumed to apply to both an audio portion and a video portion of the program ~~the program control data is formulated by user voting.~~
7. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the action indicates how the program is modified to nullify the particular portion of the program ~~program control data is tabulated from viewer feedback.~~
8. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 7 1, wherein if the rating value and the content attribute value are unspecified, then default entries are used ~~the processor is adapted to replace the first portion with alternate programming as specified by the received program control data.~~
9. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8 1, wherein the program control data is received in a batch, the processor scans the batch to determine an amount of blocking occurring during the program ~~further comprising an external device, adapted to communicate with the processor, the external device selected from the group consisting~~

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~~of a memory, a DVR, a VCR, an Internet browser, a tuner for tuning within the signal to a second channel having an alternative audio or video component.~~

10. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein if the amount of blocking exceeds a threshold, then the processor blocks the entire program ~~further comprising a transmission facility for formatting the programming, wherein the transmission facility comprises: a program server for providing programming content and a data server for providing the program control data associated with multiple discrete portions of the programming content, the program control data comprising the control instructions that alter the programming content according to the ratings attribute.~~
11. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling and managing presentation of programs and portions thereof, comprising:
 - a. ~~receiving a program from a service provider;~~
 - b. ~~receiving from the service provider~~ program control data associated with the program, the program control data ~~comprising control instructions to alter the programming content according to a ratings attribute~~ having a data format in which a default entry is subsequently followed by a series of data records, with each data record associated with a particular portion of the program, each data record having a linear representation comprising an offset time stamp, a rating value, a content attribute value, a component value, and an action;
 - c. receiving information related to the program presentation preferences of a program viewer;
 - d. ~~modifying at least a portion of the program based on the program control data according to the ratings attribute;~~ and
 - e. outputting the modified program for presentation on a display device displaying the modified content.

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12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein receiving the program control data comprises receiving the offset time stamp expressed from a start time of the program ~~modifying the content comprises blocking the portion of the program as specified by the received program control data.~~
13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~12~~ 11 wherein receiving the program control data comprises receiving the offset time stamp expressed in hours, minutes, seconds, and frames from a start of the program ~~modifying the content comprises blocking either an audio or video component of the portion of the program as specified by the received program control data.~~
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 ~~wherein~~ receiving the program control data comprises receiving the component value referring to at least one of an audio and video portion of the program to which the rating value and the content attribute value apply ~~further comprising replacing (1) the at least a portion of the program and (2) a second portion of the program with alternate programming as specified by the received program control data.~~
15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~14~~ 11, wherein receiving the program control data comprises receiving the component value referring to at least one of a substitute audio and substitute video portion for the program to which the rating value and the content attribute value apply ~~the alternate programming comprises an alternate audio or video track contained on a separate channel as specified by the received program control data.~~
16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising receiving the program control data in a batch and scanning the batch to determine at least an amount of blocking occurring during the program ~~further comprising displaying indicia to viewers to indicate (a) whether the portion of the programming will be modified or (b) each portion of the programming that has been modified.~~

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17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~11~~ 16, wherein if the amount of blocking exceeds a threshold, then the processor blocks the entire program wherein, before modifying the content, the method determines how often portions of the program will be modified, and if a number of modifications exceeds a threshold percentage of the program, then i) the program is entirely blocked and ii) a user is permitted to change the ratings attribute.
18. (Currently Amended) A method of formulating programming and data describing the programming for delivery to viewers over a communications network, the method comprising:
- a. receiving a program and program control data ~~from a service provider~~;
 - b. associating program control data with each of multiple, discrete segments of the program ~~a data record comprising (1) content data, and (2) the program control data, the program control data comprising control instructions to alter the program according to a ratings attribute having a default entry subsequently followed by a series of data records, with each data record associated with a particular portion of the program, each data record having a linear representation comprising an offset time stamp, a rating value, a content attribute value, a component value, and an action; and~~
 - c. transmitting delivering the program and the program control data ~~data record~~ either (1) to a transmission facility for forwarding to viewers over the communications network or (2) directly to a consumer electric device associated with a display for showing programming to the viewer.
19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein receiving the program control data comprises receiving the offset time stamp expressed from a start time of the program the content data comprises information related to (1) a rating category, (2) a content attribute, or (3) both a rating category and content attribute.

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20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~19~~ 18, wherein receiving the program control data comprises receiving the offset time stamp expressed in hours, minutes, seconds, and frames from a start of the program ~~further comprising tabulating viewer feedback to formulate the program control data.~~
21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising receiving the program control data in a batch and scanning the batch to determine at least an amount of blocking occurring during the program ~~wherein the program control data comprises information indicating whether the content data applies to an audio, video, or text component of each segment of the portions of the program.~~
22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~18~~ 21, wherein if the amount of blocking exceeds a threshold, then the processor blocks the entire program ~~wherein the program control data causes a discrete segment of the program to be modified according to the ratings attribute associated with the discrete segment.~~
23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~22~~ 21, wherein if the component value is unspecified, then assuming the rating value and the content attribute value apply to both an audio portion and a video portion of the program ~~the program control data specifies at least one of the following actions (1) block video, (2) block audio, (3) block video and audio, (4) block only an area of the video, (5) substitute local audio, (6) substitute local video, (7) substitute alternative audio stream, (8) substitute from alternative video channel, (9) substitute alternative video and audio channel, (10) delete, and (11) substitute alternative programming from external device.~~
24. (Currently Amended) A method for providing dynamic user control over programming delivered via a cable, broadcast, telecommunications, packet-switched or other network to a user's home that is equipped with a consumer electronics device for processing at least displaying the programming content, the method comprising:

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- a) providing the consumer electronic device with program control data synchronized to the programming, wherein the program control data ~~comprises control instructions to alter the programming according to a ratings attribute~~ has a default entry subsequently followed by a series of data records, with each data record associated with a particular portion of the programming, each data record having a linear representation comprising an offset time stamp, a rating value, a content attribute value, a component value, and an action;
 - b) receiving inputting the user's control settings that describe a type of programming the user desires to modify; and
 - c) modifying the programming according to the user's control settings and processing displaying the modified programming ~~to the user; and~~
 - d) determining whether to process for display a particular program by comparing the ratings attribute to the user's control settings and a threshold; ~~and~~
 - e) ~~determining how often portions of the programming will be modified, and if a number of modifications exceeds a threshold percentage of a program, then i) the program is entirely blocked and ii) a user is permitted to change the ratings attribute.~~
25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, wherein the step of providing the program control data comprises providing the offset time stamp expressed from a start time of the programming in which the modifying step is performed by using a DVR device dynamically to store and edit the programming as specified by the ratings attribute and the program control data in order to seamlessly display the modified programming to the user.
26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, wherein the step of providing the program control data comprises providing the offset time stamp expressed in hours, minutes, seconds, and frames from a start of the programming in which the content data is delivered to the user's consumer electronic device via the signal that carries Electronic Program Guide data.

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27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, wherein if the component value is unspecified, then assuming the rating value and the content attribute value apply to both an audio portion and a video portion of the program ~~further comprising formulating the program control data by user voting.~~
28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~27~~ 24, wherein if the rating value and the content attribute value are unspecified, then default entries are used ~~further comprising tabulating viewer feedback to formulate the program control data.~~